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The contribution of the Economic and Social Council to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda as a principal body for policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for the follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2012/263, the theme for the thematic discussion of the substantive session of 2013 is: "The contribution of ECOSOC to the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda as a principal body for policy review, policy dialogue and recommendations on issues of economic and social development and for the follow-up to the MDGs."

2. The thematic debate will take place against the backdrop of a number of related processes in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 2012, namely, the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals, consultations on the format and organizational aspects of the high-level political forum and discussions on financing for sustainable development, as well as the various work streams of the United Nations system on the elaboration of the post-2015 development framework.

3. It is also unfolding at a time when the Council is itself engaged in efforts to redefine its role in order to better respond to increasingly complex global development challenges. Additionally, the determination of the international community to secure a better well-being for both present and future generations is at the centre of the issues to be addressed.

4. The thematic debate is expected to:

(a) Make a substantive contribution to the elaboration of the post-2015 development framework;

(b) Define the potential of the Council, building on its accumulated experience, to monitor and review the implementation of a post-2015 development framework, and to coordinate and oversee its subsidiary bodies;

(c) Discuss possible approaches to be taken by the Council in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development.

II. Shaping the post-2015 development framework

A. Millennium Development Goals and beyond

5. The Millennium Development Goals have been accepted since their introduction in 2000 as a clear set of goals, targets and indicators that could be monitored and around which policymakers could organize their fight against poverty and other development challenges. The goals have helped improve advocacy, policy implementation, monitoring and accountability. They have also offered governments the opportunity to better organize follow-up and implementation and to build capacity to achieve development objectives. Thus, the goals were instrumental in promoting action that was often comparable across countries and relatively easy to monitor at the global level. Monitoring and accountability at the global level has enhanced coordination and development cooperation and provided an important framework for reviewing global commitments.

6. Despite these successes, the goals were also perceived by some as silos that lacked systemic interlinkages, which rendered them inadequate to address more complex and other emerging development challenges. Moreover, the goals came to

be seen by some States as biased in favour of the specific concerns of particular groups of countries and unable to capture adequately the entire spectrum of the internationally agreed development goals.

7. In terms of review, monitoring and accountability, the framework was viewed as imprecise and based on selective targets. For example, a major criticism is the lack of specificity on targets related to goal 8 on global partnership for development. In cases where the targets and indicators were more precise, criticisms relate to their inflexibility, one-size-fits-all approach and inability to disaggregate by the level of development of countries.

8. Regarding their utility as a development framework, another often cited view is that the goals diverted attention from a more holistic approach to development. For example, goal 8 has focused more on financial resource gaps and aid flows, and less on institution-building and structural transformation, which are also key instruments for promoting development cooperation based on the principles of genuine partnership and sustainability.

9. There is unanimity that the goals have made a big impact in the lives of billions of people and should be the point of departure for a post-2015 development framework. Many also believe, however, that this can only be the case within a broader approach that captures the concept of sustainable development, has more universal applicability and forms a stronger basis for an overarching global partnership along the lines agreed at the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.

B. Outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the evolution of the sustainable development goals

10. The implementation of the Millennium Development Goals and work on the elaboration of the sustainable development goals confirm views that international goals, targets and indicators can galvanize political will and action towards a core set of development priorities. The goals have served as a rallying point for disparate actors to bring action to bear in combating poverty. Their simplicity and brevity contributed to their acceptability and success.

11. Achieving sustainable development, however, will require a far-reaching transformation of economies and societies, including fundamental changes in development strategies and in production and consumption patterns. An inclusive green economy in the context of poverty eradication and sustainable development can also contribute to this transformation.

12. The outcome document of the Conference renewed commitment to "sustainable development and to ensuring the promotion of an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations" (General Assembly resolution 66/288). These aims must be pursued within an integrated and coherent framework.

13. Thus, the framing of the sustainable development goals will necessarily build on and be broader than the Millennium Development Goals. The predominantly social dimensions approach of the Millennium Development Goals — the eradication of poverty and the promotion of health, education and gender equality and the empowerment of women — retain their importance and already feature

prominently in the list of priority issues mentioned by Member States in the initial input of the Secretary-General to the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (A/67/634). However, alongside the imperative of bringing all humankind to a minimum threshold of well-being or development, the sustainable development goals must also integrate in a more balanced way the three dimensions of sustainable development.

14. There is growing understanding that a single, balanced and comprehensive set of goals should be at the core of the post-2015 development agenda of the United Nations. As stated in the outcome document, the process of elaborating the sustainable development goals should be coordinated and coherent with the post-2015 development agenda process.

C. Contours of the post-2015 development framework

15. There are clear principles emerging in the preparations launched by the Secretary-General for the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda. Many believe that the principles can be regarded as elements around which future discussions and outcomes will revolve, including:

(a) Building on the strengths of the Millennium Development Goals, while addressing their shortcomings;

(b) The core principles of sustainable development that will be distilled into the sustainable development goals;

(c) Better interlinkages among the objectives, providing a more holistic and universal approach to development and development cooperation;

(d) Flexibility in the setting of goals, targets and indicators so that countries can adapt them to their own specific situations;

(e) An improved system of review, monitoring and accountability;

(f) The need to reflect a global agreement that recognizes contemporary and future development challenges in all their complexity and to offer realistic, yet ambitious options for addressing them in a global partnership for development;

(g) The need to clearly define the means of implementation, based on the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities;

(h) The question of expanding the agenda to address other development challenges, including preventing conflict and promoting the rule of law.

16. The report of the United Nations System Task Team on the Post-2015 United Nations Development Agenda, "Realizing the Future We Want for All", states that business as usual cannot be an option for the post-2015 development agenda and transformative change is needed. Accordingly, that report recommends: a vision for the future that rests on the core values of human rights, equality and sustainability; an agenda format based on concrete end goals and targets; a high degree of policy coherence at the global, regional, national and sub-national levels; and an agenda conceived as truly global with shared responsibilities for all countries.

17. The Economic and Social Council can make a significant contribution to this historical dialogue and to the follow-up to and implementation of the post-2015

development agenda. The interrelated challenges of sustainable development and poverty eradication are at the heart of the Council's mandate. An issue-oriented Council can leverage the expertise and experience of the United Nations system to better analyse key development issues from a more holistic and cross-cutting perspective. The potential of a strengthened Council to enhance engagement with multiple stakeholders beyond the United Nations system and promote knowledge-sharing and joint programming for poverty eradication and sustainable development is a solid asset in this regard.

III. Identifying development priorities: contribution of the Council

18. Since the mid-1990s, the Council has promoted the integrated follow-up to major United Nations conferences and summits by advancing a holistic approach to economic, social and environmental issues that takes into account the interrelatedness of their different goals and targets. The Council has identified global development priorities initially through the themes selected by Member States to be addressed in the annual ministerial reviews, followed by a more specific identification of priorities within each theme at the national, regional and global levels, culminating in the ministerial declaration of the annual ministerial review. The reviews have assessed progress, identified gaps in implementation and recommended priority follow-up actions.

19. The cross-cutting and multidimensional scope of its themes allowed the Council to bring out the interlinkages between agreed goals and other related development concerns. As many of the issues addressed were not explicitly covered by an agreed goal, the Council played an important role in identifying and filling substantive analytical and policy gaps. This approach ensures that development is pursued in a holistic manner that reflects contemporary and emerging concerns, such as equity and sustainable development. The Council therefore has the potential to follow up on major commitments in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda.

20. Regional consultations of the Council represent the regional dimension of the reviews. The meetings are held in the lead-up to the high-level segment of the substantive sessions of the Council and involve all countries in a given region, focusing on the specific priorities for each region pertaining to the theme under review. The regional meetings have highlighted key regional challenges and provided policy options and recommendations to address development gaps, with their outcomes informing the Council's high-level policy discussions.

21. There have been challenges in integrating the regional dimension into the review. Improved synchronization of work programmes between the Council, the regional and functional commissions and specialized agencies of the United Nations will serve to better integrate the regional dimension into the review (the focus of the themes and work programmes of the regional meetings is defined by the particular priorities of each region). The "missing dimension" of regional cooperation with regard to the current Millennium Development Goals agenda could become a more prominent dimension of post-2015 development efforts, with the regional commissions and regional intergovernmental bodies assuming important roles.

22. At the national level, Member States volunteer for national voluntary presentations during the review. These presentations highlight individual country progress toward the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, and are based on their respective experiences in the implementation of their national development strategies. More specifically, the presentations focus on the main successes and most urgent challenges and priorities faced by presenting countries with a view to generating solutions.

23. Since the first annual ministerial review, in 2007, the reviews have addressed six themes: eradicating poverty and hunger; sustainable development; global public health; gender equality and the empowerment of women; education; and productive capacity, employment and decent work. A seventh theme, addressing the role of science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, in promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals, will be addressed by the Council in the review to be held in July 2013.

24. The ministerial declarations of the reviews, regional preparatory meetings and national voluntary presentations have highlighted and addressed several key themes and challenges in which the Council has made contributions. The number of presentations is particularly significant: by the end of the high-level segment of 2013 there will have been seven years of reviews, with 59 national voluntary presentations by 52 different countries, with over 300 different national policies presented and discussed. Approximately three quarters of the presentations thus far have been from developing countries and one quarter from developed countries.

25. There are several recurring priorities that have emerged from the global, regional and national levels of the reviews that could contribute towards the shaping of the post-2015 development agenda.

Poverty and sustainability

26. Poverty eradication will continue to be a key development priority for the United Nations and, together with sustainable development, will be at the core of the post-2015 development agenda. The Council's discussions at the global level, such as during the review held in 2007, have emphasized the need for a multidimensional approach to poverty eradication that integrates considerations of economic growth, a sound policy environment at all levels, the rule of law and the importance of dealing with the systemic issues in globalization, trade, investment, finance and technology, among others.

27. Discussions at the regional level have focused on solutions to development concerns that have cross-border implications, as well as the importance of regional approaches, including South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation. At the national level, the focus has been on ensuring that poverty eradication and sustainable development are clearly captured in national development strategies and priorities. The presentations provided examples of strategies to address poverty, including Brazil's family grant programme (Bolsa Família) and its "Brazil without extreme poverty" plan (Brasil Sem Miséria) and Chile's social protection floor policies. Focus has also been given to ensuring that specific challenges, such as hunger and nutrition, food security, energy, water, education, gender inequality, and the interlinkages between them, are afforded due attention. The holistic approach advocated by the Council will be pivotal in the search for more effective ways of

addressing poverty and sustainability and in integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development.

Equality and inclusion

28. Equality and inclusion have been recurring themes in the reviews, particularly with respect to global public health; education, equality and the empowerment of women; education; and employment. These themes assumed particular importance and emphasis in 2010, when the ministerial declaration reaffirmed that gender equality and the empowerment of women are essential to economic and social development. The declaration also recognized that implementation gaps persist and stressed the importance of implementing strategies in 19 different areas, including promoting and protecting women's equal access to adequate housing, property and land; facilitating access by women to affordable microfinance; and ensuring women's access to social protection. Similarly, equal access to opportunities for employment, education and training for the disabled, women, youth and other marginalized groups was stressed by the Council in 2012.

29. The African regional preparatory meeting in 2010 identified health as a major development priority relating to gender equality and the empowerment of women in Africa. Other regional meetings have also addressed equality and inclusion in the context of other review themes. With respect to the national level, the Republic of Moldova identified the need to increase the participation of women in political processes and of gender mainstreaming into social protection, health and education; the Netherlands stressed the necessity to foster gender balance in the private sector and universities; and the Republic of Korea highlighted the importance of the Act on Equal Employment and Support for Work-Family Reconciliation in addressing gender inequality in the workplace.

Employment

30. Employment has been a cross-cutting issue in the reviews in relation to poverty eradication, the empowerment of women, education and science, technology and innovation. The Council addressed the issue most directly, however, in the context of the 2012 review on productive capacity, employment and decent work. In particular, the 2012 ministerial declaration emphasized the need to place full employment and job creation as a central objective of macroeconomic policy objectives.

31. In 2012, the African regional meeting for the review highlighted the need to foster the development of small and medium enterprises in promoting job-rich growth. Latin America and the Caribbean proposed the creation of a regional high-level panel on youth employment; and the Asia and Pacific region identified challenges derived from inequality, job-poor growth and gender disparities in the labour market.

32. Examples at the national level introduced during the presentations included Kenya earmarking unemployment and underemployment as its most difficult and persistent problem; Ecuador prioritizing job security for the poorest and the extension of social security coverage to the underemployed and unemployed; and Algeria seeking to sustain its successes in economic and human development over the long-term through the diversification of sources of economic growth and job creation.

Education, health and food security and nutrition

33. Reducing education and health gaps is central to the Millennium Development Goals and will continue to be a priority in the post-2015 development agenda. The 2011 ministerial declaration recognized that education is essential for human development and sustainable development. At the regional level, Member States highlighted progress in the attainment of internationally agreed education goals and pointed out gaps. For example, both Africa and Latin America and the Caribbean highlighted the need to address education quality, while Asia and the Pacific highlighted the challenges derived from late entry into school, early dropout and gender inequality in education as critical development priorities.

34. At the national level, some Member States identified additional national educational priorities. For example, Bangladesh noted the need to address vulnerability in school participation, particularly of children from poor families, derived from macroeconomic volatility and uncertainty. Germany underscored its support to fostering education outcomes through capacity-building assistance programmes in Africa.

35. In the ministerial declaration of 2009, Member States recognized the interlinkages between health and poverty and that achieving the health-related goals is also central to sustainable development. The global discussion emphasized the linkages between health, poverty and sustainable development and also highlighted the social determinants of health outcomes. The regional reviews stressed the importance of addressing non-communicable diseases, developing strategies to confront the challenges presented by HIV, articulating financing strategies for health care and promoting health literacy. Additional national health-related priorities were highlighted by China, underscoring the importance of controlling infectious diseases, and by Sri Lanka, noting the need to improve housing, sanitation and water supply.

36. The Council has highlighted food security and nutrition as one of the most urgent challenges the world faces. As rising incomes and a growing population exert pressures for more and more nutritious food, climate change and natural disasters continue to threaten food production. The Council has underscored the need to mitigate food-related risks for the most vulnerable communities, including by improving land governance. Related problems, including child malnutrition, agricultural productivity, environmental sustainability, food waste, global food price volatility and regional access to food markets, have been also brought to the fore by the Council.

Urbanization and infrastructure

37. Urbanization and infrastructure are also themes that have been examined by the review. At the global level, Member States stressed the need to strengthen productive capacity in developing countries, including to address their infrastructure deficits. They reaffirmed that improved infrastructure is a determinant of sustained economic growth. In 2008, Western Asia identified the promotion of sustainable urbanization as a critical development priority. Policies proposed to foster sustainable urbanization included adopting a common green rating tool for urban developments and the strengthening of public-private partnerships for development. Effective urban transport and policies to facilitate telecommuting were addressed in the context of the intersessional meeting of the Commission on Science and

Technology for Development in 2013. These were regarded as a means to improve labour productivity and health indicators and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

38. Examples from the national voluntary presentations included: the Lao People's Democratic Republic identifying the importance of investing in infrastructure for reducing poverty and improving health and education outcomes; Algeria prioritizing the development of public infrastructure in its development strategies; Brazil identifying investment and infrastructure as one of their development priorities; and the United Republic of Tanzania highlighting the rising challenges of urban poverty.

Science, technology and innovation

39. Science, technology and innovation, as well as culture, are important drivers of social and economic transformation and critical to progress in the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development. In the context of integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development in the post-2015 development agenda, science, technology and innovation will be crucial enablers for success and important means of empowering people. Promoting inclusive access to the benefits of science, technology and innovation, particularly information technology, will ensure that governments and all stakeholders have the means to deliver on their commitments towards poverty eradication and sustainable development.

40. The value of science, technology and innovation depends on the extent to which they are integrated into national development strategies and action plans for sustainable development, and is linked to economic, industrial and education policies, in particular. In the Arab region, key development priorities revolve around the role of education as the backbone to effective access to science and technology.

41. The African regional review in 2013 concluded that enhanced innovation throughout Africa would be the surest means of overcoming the technological, social, economic and environmental challenges associated with achieving the Millennium Development Goals. The transition to sustainable development will be highly dependent on the use of innovative technologies. Science, technology and innovation would also be an effective instrument for ensuring the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and should form an integral part of the post-2015 development framework.

Environmental sustainability

42. As a subsidiary organ of the Council, the Commission on Sustainable Development considered various approaches to natural resource use and management and their interlinkages with sustainable production and consumption, poverty eradication and environmental sustainability. For its part, the review has called for individual and collective action by Governments and other stakeholders, to mitigate the impacts of the risks of environmental degradation and climate change on the global economy and to ensure that the interdependent goals of poverty eradication and sustainable development are met. Related concerns regarding the loss of biological diversity and the effects of drought and desertification were also highlighted as deserving critical attention. For example, during the national voluntary presentations, Belgium described its efforts in pursuing sustainable development; Finland identified as a priority the need to develop sustainable development indicators; and Kazakhstan underlined its ecological destabilization risks stemming from such factors as depletion of resources and desertification.

43. The Council has promoted agreement that ensuring the achievement of sustainable development in all countries requires the balanced integration of economic growth, social development and environmental protection by making such goals the central objective of national development strategies, supported by regional and global commitments on the basis of common but differentiated responsibilities. The challenge ahead is to ensure that these dimensions are captured in the development goals under consideration, together with relevant indicators to monitor their implementation.

IV. Institutional framework for integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development

A. Balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development

44. The outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development included recognition for the key role played by the Council in achieving the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. This mandate gave a new impetus to the work that the Council has undertaken regarding the integrated and coordinated implementation of, and follow-up to, the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits. Some work on integrating the three dimensions of sustainable development was already being undertaken by national Governments and a number of partners, including in the United Nations system. However, such efforts fell short of the vision of Agenda 21: Programme of Action for Sustainable Development, and hence brought about the need to identify a more robust approach.

45. Member States are primarily responsible for the implementation of the outcomes of the Conference. The first stage in the integration process is to ensure that national Governments have the right tools to integrate sustainable development and poverty eradication in their development strategies and priorities. Programming and operational tools supporting national development efforts, including the common country assessment and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework, are already in use in many developing countries and could be utilized as the first step in ensuring integration.

46. A key test to integration at the national level will be the extent to which national development strategies take into account international commitments on sustainable development. Well designed national, regional and global review processes offer a good system for mobilization, review, accountability and voluntary exchange of lessons learned and good practices in the implementation of commitments to sustainable development. As such, the national voluntary presentations are important implementation and policy review forums.

47. In General Assembly resolution 66/288, Member States underscored the importance of regional cooperation in integration. Many development challenges are of regional and transboundary scope and therefore cannot be addressed fully by countries acting alone.

48. Regional planning for sustainable development requires an integrated policy approach that involves the participation of all relevant regional stakeholders. The

regional preparatory meetings for the review present an opportunity for regional actors to gather and discuss regional development challenges. The participatory nature of the meetings provides a forum in which social, economic and environmental issues can be discussed and integrated into regional development approaches.

49. The regional commissions, United Nations entities working at the regional level and subregional entities play a critical intermediary role in bringing together national policymakers from the same region to compare development experiences. They can also advise on relevant policy and financing modalities to achieve progress at the national level towards the post-2015 development goals.

50. The Council and its subsidiary bodies, including the regional commissions, can further develop these regional approaches and thus strengthen the role of the regional commissions as institutional conduits between the global, regional and national levels. They can also help identify practical modalities for the balanced integration of the economic, social and environmental dimensions into a robust post-2015 development agenda that takes into consideration the regional dimension. The regional implementation mechanisms established in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development could be merged with the regional meetings of the review to facilitate a review of prioritization and integration progress.

51. The international community is enjoined to implement sustainable development commitments in accordance with the principles of common but differentiated responsibilities. Thus, there will need to be continual communications and exchanges in the follow-up and implementation process between the national, regional and global levels, bound together by policy coordination and coherence, shared technical and expert knowledge and political commitment.

52. The mobilization of financial resources from all sources for financing development is critical to the success of the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals. The many financial and economic crises that have plagued the global economy have made it clear that such crises have serious repercussions for all economies, but particularly for developing countries highly dependent on official development assistance flows and other external resources. Development financing should, therefore, be included in the dialogue on poverty eradication, sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda.

53. In financing for development, concerted efforts are needed to strengthen the follow-up on the thematic areas of the Monterrey Consensus of the International Conference on Financing for Development and the Doha Declaration on Financing for Development, including in the areas of domestic resource mobilization, foreign direct investment, international trade, finance and other innovative sources of funding. The contribution that the Council has made in this area, through the special high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), and through the high-level policy dialogue with the international financial and trade institutions at the high-level segment, could be strengthened considerably.

54. Clear institutional innovations are needed at all levels to ensure effective review and monitoring so that gaps and implementation challenges can be identified

and remedied on a continuous basis. It will also be necessary to put together a set of tools that offer practical guidance on how the actual work of integrating the three dimensions can be undertaken by all stakeholders while taking into account different national and regional realities. The institutional review that is required for effective response has already started in the General Assembly.

55. The follow-up to and implementation of the three dimensions of sustainable development form part of the mandates and work programmes of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary bodies, as well as of the funds and programmes, specialized agencies, and other entities of the United Nations development system. The current challenge is to reorganize and re-energize the United Nations system to be able to undertake this effectively.

56. A mapping of all the United Nations bodies and entities involved is required, so that gaps can be identified and redressed. A broad overview would include, as mentioned above, the high-level meeting of the Council with the Bretton Woods institutions, WTO and UNCTAD and the high-level policy dialogue with the international financial and trade institutions on current developments in the global economy. The work of the funds and programmes, the specialized agencies, and other United Nations entities in the economic area also needs to be strengthened. These should become central to the economic dimension of sustainable development.

57. In the social area, the work of the Commission on Social Development, the Commission on Population and Development and the Commission on the Status of Women, for example, provide a solid foundation on which to strengthen the social dimension. In the environmental area, the United Nations Environmental Programme and the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change are good starting points for continuing to build the environmental dimension.

58. The General Assembly and the Council have already been tasked with undertaking specific functions in the follow-up to the outcomes of the Conference, although the institutional arrangement for this task, such as the high-level political forum, and a restructured Council, remains to be finalized. In addition, the United Nations system needs to mobilize technical support through the promotion of a science-policy interface to facilitate policy coherence in eradicating poverty and fostering sustainable development.

59. Other measures that are under consideration include better linkages to the General Assembly process on the follow-up to the mandates contained in resolution 66/288 and the establishment of the high-level political forum; staggered sessions of the Council throughout the year to sharpen its focus on issues and improve its scheduling with respect to related meetings, thus attracting high-level participation; and a clearer definition of the mechanisms for the discharge of the functions related to the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development. The needs of countries in special situations such as the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries and the small island developing States will also need to be taken into consideration.

B. Monitoring and accountability

60. The Council also plays an important monitoring and accountability role in ensuring that commitments are honoured. Where implementation is lagging, new impetus is generated, thus providing a strong and necessary linkage between the technical and policymaking processes.

National voluntary presentations and voluntary mutual reviews

61. The national voluntary presentations have, in the past seven years, been important accountability tools in the follow-up to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. On that basis, the presentations could play an important role in the review of and follow-up to General Assembly resolution 66/288 and the post-2015 development agenda.

62. These positive contributions notwithstanding, there have been suggestions that the presentations should be improved further. For instance, there are continuing concerns that more efforts are needed to codify the lessons and the good practices gathered from the process. There is, in fact, no clear mechanism for follow-up on the outcomes of the presentations. In order also to encourage more Member States to volunteer, there may be the need to build in appropriate incentives for participation. There are suggestions that the participation of all Member States would make the reviews more credible.

63. Transforming the presentations into voluntary mutual reviews, as proposed by the Secretary-General in his report on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 on the strengthening of the Economic and Social Council (A/67/736-E/2013/7) would address such gaps. While the reviews would remain voluntary, the mutual reviews would adopt a more rigorous approach, including developing a standardized analytical and reporting framework; developing follow-up and report back mechanisms; incorporating available national statistical data; and incorporating renewed participatory approaches into the process. In this regard, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs is implementing a development account project that supports the participation of Member States in the presentations and incorporates mechanisms for reviewing and fostering the integration of the Council's policy recommendations into national development strategies.

64. A fully fledged global mutual accountability mechanism with universal membership and multi-stakeholder participation has yet to emerge. Global and regional initiatives can play a supportive role in promoting debate among development partners, as well as encouraging experience-sharing and capacity-building for programme countries and other stakeholders.

Development Cooperation Forum

65. The establishment, pursuant to the 2005 World Summit Outcome, of the biennial Development Cooperation Forum as a key new function of the Council marked an important step in strengthening mutual accountability. During its first five years, the Forum provided an effective and inclusive multi-stakeholder forum with considerable influence on global development cooperation and mutual accountability discussions. It has played a key role in fostering dialogue and knowledge-sharing both through its analytical work and by the holding of global and regional expert group meetings on mutual accountability.

66. Two broad-based surveys conducted by the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and the United Nations Development Programme in 105 countries in preparation for the sessions of the Forum held in 2010 and 2012 showed that much work remains to be done to strengthen national mutual accountability systems. Key pillars of national mutual accountability are rarely in place. To date, 26 countries had made some progress on national-level mutual accountability and 20 countries have initiatives under way to improve the quality of their mutual accountability. However, only three developing countries have aid policies with individual development partners with targets that are monitored regularly. Lack of political leadership and capacity constraints were also identified as major obstacles to stronger mutual accountability.

67. The report of the Secretary-General suggests that the Forum could further expand its role as a driver for greater national and global accountability in development cooperation by promoting mutual accountability as an overarching principle in the post-2015 development agenda, with a view to enhanced reporting on agreed commitments and adapting development cooperation to emerging challenges (see A/67/736, para. 26).

68. The post-2015 global development agenda should be supported by robust mutual accountability mechanisms at all levels. At the global level such a mechanism can serve as an important vehicle to disseminate the results and lessons learned of the global assessments of efforts to strengthen accountability systems at the national level to a wider audience. The emergence of new actors and informal networks has made it even more urgent to develop balanced and inclusive monitoring and accountability frameworks where development partners can work together on an equal footing. Parliaments, local governments, civil society, women's organizations, trade unions and the private sector should all have a strong role to play.

69. With its multi-stakeholder approach, the Forum is particularly well placed to undertake the tasks of an inclusive and balanced mutual accountability mechanism. The preparations for the Forum include country-led high-level symposiums that focus on key development issues aimed at fostering an open, informed and frank dialogue among development actors and developing ideas for future action. The Forum can also serve as an opportunity to systematically distil the lessons learned from other assessments at the global, regional and country levels.

C. Coordination and coherence

70. The subsidiary bodies of the Council, including the functional and regional commissions and expert bodies, constitute the technical and knowledge repositories of the Council's wider system and have been mandated to carry out specific tasks related to the follow-up to and implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. In many cases their mandates are more holistic and broader than addressing specific development goals. In the ongoing discussions on the United Nations system response to the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and the elaboration of a post-2015 development agenda, there is a clear recognition of the importance of these intergovernmental and expert bodies and of the technical support that they provide to the Council in their respective areas of competence.

Their technical and knowledge assets would be also critical in supporting the Council in its response to crises and emergencies.

71. The subsidiary bodies of the Council should be leveraged in new ways to respond to new challenges and issues in poverty eradication and sustainable development. Examples of this in recent years include the Council's work with the Commission on the Status of Women, on the empowerment of women; with the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, on science, technology and innovation; and with the Commission on Narcotic Drugs, on the impact of illicit drug activities on development. The engagements contribute to the development of important norms and standards and provide critical policy guidance in response to the analysis of new trends and their impact on development.

72. The Council has also received valuable advice in preparation for its annual sessions from the Committee for Development Policy and the Committee on Non-Governmental Organizations. The regional commissions have supported the mandates of the Council principally by focusing on the regional dimensions of development challenges. However, they have also participated in national workshops held in preparation for national voluntary presentations, engaged in the substantive and logistical planning of regional consultations and provided inputs to the reports of the Secretary-General for the annual ministerial review and the thematic debate.

73. The ongoing discussions on the review of General Assembly resolution 61/16 have re-emphasized the role of the subsidiary machinery of the Council. The new mandates that have been assigned to the Council require fashioning its technical and expert responses to generate ideas and policies that will overcome the constraints encountered in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals. There is a long tradition of coordinating and integrating different aspects of development concerns that must be reinvigorated and focus to a greater degree on key development priorities.

74. In order to improve coherence, the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies should be guided by a unified vision and agenda with clearer reporting lines. Selecting a main theme each year for the work of the Council and its subsidiary bodies would increase coherence, while the Council should also engage in more substantive dialogue on the reports and recommendations of the subsidiary bodies, including the functional commissions, for a better two-way engagement. The periodic meetings between the bureau of the Council and its subsidiary bodies also need to be strengthened and utilized to ensure that work programmes are complementary and mutually supportive.

75. There should also be a review of the coordination and guidance offered through the quadrennial comprehensive policy review process for the operational activities of the United Nations system, with the aim of improving operational, normative and programmatic linkages, as well as linkages at the national, regional and global levels.

76. There will also be a need for a careful review to determine whether the secretariat of the Council has adequate resources to support the enhanced coordination and coherence functions mentioned above.

D. Emergencies and humanitarian crises

77. Addressing issues of special economic, humanitarian and disaster relief assistance will remain a high priority for the international community.

78. The complexity of issues and the imperative to act promptly and with as much information as necessary have always demanded coordinated and coherent responses. Resilience-building activities, such as disaster risk reduction, early warning and risk monitoring, disaster preparedness and early recovery, contribute to safeguarding development gains by mitigating the human and economic losses caused by natural and man-made disasters.

79. While many countries have made significant progress towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, according to the World Bank's *World Development Report 2011: Conflict, Security and Development*, no low-income country in a state of fragility and affected by conflict has achieved a single Millennium Development Goal. Projections indicate that by 2030, the vast majority of the world's poorest will live in countries affected by chronic violence and political instability, with a heavy concentration in Africa. In this regard, closer coherence and coordination between humanitarian and development actors is very important. This approach is increasingly critical, as the failure to reduce and manage the risk of crises can often compromise all efforts toward the achievement of poverty eradication and sustainable development goals.

80. The discussions on the transition from relief to development in the Council enable interfacing and collaboration between the humanitarian and development communities. In 2012, for instance, the humanitarian segment discussed the requirement and importance of building resilience in the Sahel, highlighting the need to address the root causes of crises and strengthen resilience in tandem with the immediate humanitarian response. It also proposed ways to better coordinate development and humanitarian action. The discussion reflected the increasing focus among humanitarian actors on proactively managing and reducing disaster risks as an effective and cost-efficient alternative to traditional natural disasters responses. There has also been focus a on the need to promote the sharing of data for more effective evidence-based decisions.

81. The capacity of both the Council and the United Nations system at large to respond quickly to global emergencies and humanitarian crises can be improved. The Council needs to be able to convene the support of all the relevant parts of the United Nations system quickly, bringing to those emergencies and humanitarian crises all the analytical and other resources necessary to make quick decisions and act effectively. It is equally important to build in risk assessment and the capacity to anticipate crises so that development gains in the aftermath of crises can be consolidated and strengthened.

V. Engaging partners

82. In the United Nations Millennium Declaration (General Assembly resolution 55/2), the international community resolved to give greater opportunities and develop strong partnerships with external actors to contribute to the realization of the Organization's goals and programmes. This commitment to partnership has since been repeated at every major summit of the United Nations.

83. The implementation of all the mandates and goals set by the United Nations can best be achieved by leveraging catalytic partnerships with non-governmental organizations, civil society, the private sector, philanthropic organizations and academic and scientific institutions. Partnership is a key enabler for meeting global challenges and leading the initiation of transformation. These can have a catalytic impact on the full range of United Nations activities from poverty eradication and the promotion of sustained economic growth and sustainable development, to peace and security, humanitarian action and human rights.

84. To this end, the Secretary-General launched a partnerships initiative in 2012 that will be implemented through a proposed United Nations Partnerships Facility. The core task of the mechanism will be to capture the potential of partnerships to support the delivery to scale of the full spectrum of United Nations mandates, goals and values.

85. In its resolution 66/223, entitled "Towards global partnerships", the General Assembly underscored two aspects of partnerships involving the United Nations system that require nurturing. The first relates to voluntary relationships between various parties, both public and non-public, in which all participants agree to work together to achieve common objectives, such as those defined by the internationally agreed development goals. The second relates to continuing efforts to find innovative and additional ways to achieve lasting impact by identifying and replicating successful partnership models and pursuing new forms of collaboration with both public and non-public actors. These can include regional and subregional organizations of both developing and developed countries that have come together around given issues in the context of South-South, North-South and triangular cooperation.

86. Partnerships with the private sector, philanthropic foundations, civil society and non-governmental organizations have increasingly become an integral part of the work of many United Nations organizations. These partnerships have not only complemented the efforts of the United Nations system to achieve its objectives but also contribute to its renewal by introducing new methods of work. While these partnerships cannot substitute for governmental responsibilities and commitments, they are instrumental in the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Development Goals.

87. The partnership engagements undertaken to date have supported ongoing work related to preparations for the annual ministerial reviews on the basis of themes agreed by Member States. This can be strengthened further by examining in detail how partnerships can be structured around clear thematic areas and contribute to poverty eradication and sustainable development.

88. The Council has demonstrated its ability to bring stakeholders together and nurture ideas for partnerships. The Partnerships Forum and youth forum are good examples of the potential of partnerships. The discussions that were undertaken in 2013 on science, technology and innovations and on philanthropy underscored the need to enrich the intergovernmental dialogue with new ideas from all stakeholders. It is now necessary to come up with ways to ensure that the wealth of ideas, knowledge and solutions discussed are used effectively to enrich programmes and development outcomes.

89. The Council is uniquely positioned to provide opportunities for systematic, strategic and in-depth discussion of joint initiatives between Member States, the United Nations system and their non-governmental partners. This will be critical given the clear understanding that the work on the integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and the post-2015 development agenda can only succeed with the active and effective involvement of all stakeholders.

VI. Conclusions

90. **The major United Nations conferences and summits, including the Millennium Summit, were extremely useful in focusing the attention of the international community around key development challenges. The role of the Council in the integrated and coordinated implementation of and follow-up to the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits needs to be strengthened.**

91. **In this regard, the post-2015 development agenda should be based on more holistic, sustainable pathways. There is value in elaborating one coherent global post-2015 development agenda, with sustainable development at its core and one set of goals encompassing all its interconnected dimensions, based on the fundamental principles of human rights, equality and sustainability. Accountability, mutual responsibilities and a clear understanding of different capabilities in responding to this new framework will be essential to its successful implementation.**

92. **The Council has made substantive contributions to the review of the implementation of the outcomes of the major international conferences and summits and has identified a number of development priorities. Through this work many recurrent development themes have been addressed and examined in detail, including in the areas of: eradicating poverty and hunger; sustainable development; inequality and exclusion; gender equality and the empowerment of women; decent work and employment; education; health, food security and nutrition; infrastructure and urbanization; science, technology and innovation; and environmental sustainability. The wealth of ideas, knowledge and lessons learned, as well as the solutions recommended in the discussions, should be built upon in the elaboration of the post-2015 development agenda.**

93. **The role of the Council and its subsidiary bodies in the balanced integration of the three dimensions of sustainable development and in the coordinated and integrated follow-up to the outcomes of major international conferences and summits will be crucial in facilitating sustainable development policy coherence and coordination. The proposals that are currently being discussed in the review of the implementation of General Assembly resolution 61/16 should aim for a more coordinated and coherent issues-based work programme that will further enhance the Council's effectiveness and contributions to advancing development.**

94. **The annual ministerial review has performed important functions in reviewing and monitoring progress in the implementation of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, at the national, regional and global levels. The Development Cooperation Forum has played an equally important role in promoting global dialogue and**

partnerships on development cooperation, as well as in reviewing and monitoring global development commitments. The parameters of effective monitoring and accountability mechanisms at the national, regional and global levels are just emerging. Undoubtedly, the functions that the Council has undertaken since 2005 enjoy solid support and have much potential for the implementation of the mandates of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development and of the post-2015 development agenda.

95. **The Council's work with its subsidiary machinery has demonstrated its potential as a key platform for promoting coordination and coherence and for leveraging the full technical and knowledge assets of the United Nations system, including in response to rapidly emerging and new development challenges. This coordination and coherence potential should be further developed and fully utilized in executing the new mandates of the Council as well as in the implementation of and the follow-up to the post-2015 development framework.**

96. **The Council has an important role in engaging a wide range of development actors. The partnership engagements entered into to date have supported ongoing efforts of the Council in all areas on the basis of themes and priorities agreed by Member States. This engagement can be further strengthened by examining in detail how partnerships can be structured around clear thematic areas and thus contribute more systematically to the post-2015 development framework, including the sustainable development goals. The work of the Partnerships Forum and youth forum has clearly demonstrated the potential contribution of multiple partners to new and innovative development thinking and solutions.**

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Implementation of integrated, coherent and coordinated support to South Sudan by the United Nations system

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is the second to be submitted to the Economic and Social Council on the achievements of and challenges faced by the United Nations system in providing integrated, coherent and coordinated support to the Government of South Sudan following independence in July 2011. The report outlines how the architecture for assistance to South Sudan is evolving in a context that requires development partners to continuously adapt to emerging political, humanitarian and socioeconomic challenges and priorities. In particular, it presents how the United Nations system adapts to the national development priorities of the country and to the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States, South Sudan being a pilot country for that initiative. The status of implementation of United Nations plans and coordination mechanisms is also presented.

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I. Introduction

1. After becoming an independent nation on 9 July 2011, South Sudan was admitted into the General Assembly as the 193rd State Member of the United Nations on 14 July 2011. Following this, in its resolution 2011/43, the Economic and Social Council requested the Secretary-General to report on how the United Nations development system is implementing integrated, coherent support to South Sudan, consistent with national priorities, while ensuring clarity of roles and responsibilities in the implementation of United Nations operational activities.

2. In July 2012, the first report of the Secretary-General (E/2012/76) was submitted to the Economic and Social Council for its consideration at its substantive session. In its decision 2012/250, the Council requested another report to be submitted at its substantive session of 2013.

3. The present report outlines how the architecture for international development assistance to South Sudan is evolving in a context that requires international partners to continuously adapt to emerging challenges and priorities. This requires flexible frameworks that allow partners to respond to fragility and humanitarian needs while working towards State take-off. The report describes the progress and setbacks related to the implementation of development and peacebuilding frameworks by the United Nations system in accordance with the Council's request to the Secretary-General and all relevant organs and bodies of the United Nations system to address the humanitarian, peacebuilding and development challenges facing the country.

II. Context

4. The second year of independence of South Sudan was marked by continued austerity measures, protracted negotiations over outstanding issues with regard to the Comprehensive Peace Agreement with the Sudan and continued humanitarian needs. While the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between South Sudan and the Sudan in Addis Ababa in late September 2012 signalled a positive turn in cross-border relations, the agreements were not immediately implemented and oil production did not resume as quickly as expected. An agreement between the two nations on the implementation of the Cooperation Agreement was since signed in March 2013, raising hopes for an oil revenue-sharing arrangement between the two countries and the resumption of oil production. In the meantime, austerity measures have resulted in heavy cuts in public spending and prevented the Government from delivering and further improving on its core functions, including basic service delivery systems. High food prices and increasing inflation have also forced households into further destitution.

5. While recognizing the impressive achievements of South Sudan during the period under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in establishing State structures from virtually nothing, the State-building challenges facing the country remain enormous. South Sudan remains one of the most underdeveloped countries in the world. Challenged by widespread poverty and absent or dysfunctional service delivery systems, and without the public infrastructure required for growth in place, the country has not yet been able to organize the Government, administration and legal system to tap and distribute wealth in a way that benefits the people as a whole

and addresses human development needs. Infrastructure that enables communities to engage in trade remains one of the greatest challenges, with around two thirds of the country cut off from major routes and towns during the rainy season.

6. South Sudan has some of the lowest human development indicators in the world. While the number of children enrolled in primary school increased sixfold from 300,000 to 1.8 million between 2005 and 2012, dropout rates remained high at 90 per cent. Less than 30 per cent of the population has access to health care, and less than 25 per cent of children are fully immunized by the age of 12 months. The maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world, with 2,054 deaths per 100,000 births, and there are less than 100 qualified midwives in the country. More than 70 per cent of the population cannot read or write. For women, the indicators are particularly alarming: 92 per cent of women are illiterate, and of girls aged 6 to 13 years, less than 40 per cent attend school and only slightly more than 2 per cent attend secondary school. Gender-based violence, forced marriage and child marriage are widespread.

7. In 2012, South Sudan continued to take steps towards the consolidation of State-building goals, including the adoption of key legislation, the inauguration of the National Elections Commission and security sector reforms. Central to the State-building agenda will be the four key elements of national constitutional review, national reconciliation, the census and national elections, which together will help to shape the future of the country for years to come. While important steps have been taken to prepare the ground for those activities, austerity measures continue to constrain adequate national resource allocation to those time-sensitive processes.

8. Humanitarian needs continue to pose major challenges for the country and threaten to overshadow the longer-term development agenda. Conflict in the border region with the Sudan has resulted in growing numbers of Sudanese seeking refuge inside South Sudan, and more than 193,000 Sudanese refugees are currently registered in the country. While the projected cereal deficit for 2013 is smaller than it was in 2012, 1.5 million people are still estimated to be in need of food assistance. Intercommunal conflict, border tensions and seasonal flooding have temporarily displaced communities across the country, disrupting people's livelihoods and damaging harvests and assets.

9. In response to austerity, the Government has started to implement fiscal reforms and measures to improve public financial management. In less than 24 months, non-oil revenue collection has increased sevenfold from 10 million South Sudanese pounds ($3.3 million) to more than 70 million South Sudanese pounds ($23 million) per month, covering 14 per cent of Government expenditures. To increase fiscal transparency, quarterly budget execution reports are being published and spending controls have been tightened.

III. Responding to emerging challenges

10. In the context of the post-conflict fragility of South Sudan, recurring shocks, including outbursts of violence, large-scale food insecurity and fluctuating consumer prices, are an all-too-common reality. A key priority for the United Nations is to reduce vulnerabilities and enable the South Sudanese to manage risks through integrated humanitarian, recovery and development support. United Nations efforts are geared towards building household, community and national resilience to

cope with emergencies as a result of insecurity, extreme weather conditions and deficient service delivery systems. Simultaneously, the United Nations continues to support the Government in building a viable State.

11. Throughout 2012, the Government of South Sudan and the United Nations and its partners have worked hard to consolidate and safeguard the progress made during the Comprehensive Peace Agreement period, including the establishment of essential functions and systems, capacity development and the expansion of basic service delivery in the education and health sectors, while simultaneously working to prevent the economic collapse that many feared, following the shutdown in oil production. The United Nations supported the Government in developing the Core Functions under Austerity initiative, which outlines the most important State-building support required to keep the State functioning during this difficult period, including planning and financial management, oversight and accountability, conflict prevention and the rule of law.

Box 1
Food security

Hunger and undernutrition remain persistent and seasonally recurring problems in South Sudan. Over the past three years, more than 10 per cent of the population has been severely food-insecure, and another 30 per cent moderately food-insecure, with peaks during the hunger season, a period of scarcity between harvests, from May until August. Similarly, various forms of undernutrition have been prevalent in South Sudan for many years, including severe acute malnutrition, reflecting short-term nutritional deficiencies. Chronic malnutrition and micronutrient deficiency are both reflections of the long-term effects of poor nutrition as a result of inadequate diets.

South Sudan does not produce enough food. In 2013, the annual cereal deficit is expected to be around 350,000 metric tons, which is less than in 2012 (474,000 metric tons) but more than in 2010 (225,000 metric tons). Even though 2012 was a relatively good harvest year, many people remain on the brink of crisis.

Addressing food insecurity and breaking the cycle of hunger require investment in the right kind of programmes. Under the leadership of the World Food Programme and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations has been working with the Government and non-governmental organization partners to design programmes that address short-term needs and, at the same time, build the resilience of households and communities. In the past year, food security partners have strengthened their links, including with nutritional sectors. Approaches to food insecurity have increasingly targeted human capital. For instance, daily feeding programmes in some 1,350 schools aim to prevent children from dropping out of school. Using food assistance, communities are being organized to address the causes of food insecurity, for example by building roads that connect them to markets, health facilities and schools. Farmer field schools have been instrumental in the increased use of ox ploughs in some states, leading to

better agricultural production. In 2012, 2,000 farmers were trained on 76 farmer field schools in six states throughout South Sudan. Discussions have emerged on addressing rural labour shortages by creating cash schemes for urban, unemployed youth to work in rural areas. Institutional capacity to detect food insecurity is being strengthened by establishing food security monitoring systems embedded in the National Bureau of Statistics. The establishment of a strategic food reserve can provide relief after harvest failures.

IV. National development priorities

Extension of the South Sudan Development Plan

12. The South Sudan Development Plan 2011-2013 was established in the lead-up to independence and identifies key development objectives in four priority areas: (a) governance; (b) economic development; (c) social and human development; (d) conflict prevention and security. The plan forms the basis of the Government's budget planning process and serves as the framework for sector aid financing strategies. Austerity measures, however, have meant that the implementation of many aspects of the Plan has been stalled.

13. In February 2013, the Government announced its intention to extend the South Sudan Development Plan. It envisages an extension until July 2013 and has requested the United Nations country team and individual United Nations agencies, funds and programmes to align their existing frameworks with the new timeline of the Plan.

South Sudan aid strategy

14. The Government of South Sudan has developed an aid strategy to guide international engagement with the Government's aid management process. With "One vision, one plan" as the overarching framework defining the country's development priorities, a sector-based approach aims to ascertain a coherent approach to policymaking, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation. The strategy includes regular donor coordination forums in which the United Nations and international partners are represented and provides a calendar for annual budget planning and implementation cycles.

15. The Government uses the Aid Information Management System as its main tool for recording standardized information on aid activities. Its purpose is to provide a comprehensive overview of aid-funded activities in the country and coordinate aid information for use in the national planning and budgeting processes. The Aid Information Management System is an essential component of the Government's aid strategy, the national framework for improving the effectiveness of development assistance in the implementation of the South Sudan Development Plan.

Core Functions under Austerity

16. To ensure continued support for its most critical functions during the period of austerity, the Government conducted a prioritization of the development objectives

articulated in the South Sudan Development Plan in the context of the Core Functions under Austerity initiative. Under the leadership of the Presidential Adviser for Economic Affairs and with support from the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the World Bank and international development partners, focus areas were identified and prioritized in line with the four pillars under the South Sudan Development Plan. The prioritization was finalized in November 2012 and submitted to the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning to guide the planning and budgeting process for the 2013-2014 financial year. The initiative further aims to guide donor assistance throughout the period of austerity to ensure the continued functioning of the Government and prevent a retraction of progress made in the Government's State-building efforts since the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement.

V. "One vision, one plan": the New Deal as the framework for development cooperation with South Sudan

17. Given the challenges that South Sudan has faced during its early years of statehood, the need for effective and coherent support from international partners, including the United Nations system, is crucial. Support must be geared towards longer-term development needs while addressing short-term shocks in parallel. As a member of the Group of Seven Plus fragile States, South Sudan nominated itself as a pilot country for the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States during the Fourth High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness, held in Busan, Republic of Korea, in November and December 2011.

18. National implementation of the New Deal started in August 2012 with a fragility assessment that was endorsed in November 2012. The fragility assessment forms the foundation for a shared understanding between the Government and international development partners on country priorities using the five peacebuilding and State-building goals. The peacebuilding and State-building goals represent the prerequisites for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and include: (a) legitimate politics; (b) security; (c) justice; (d) economic foundations; and (e) revenues and services.

Box 2
Fragility assessment

As a New Deal pilot country, South Sudan embarked on its first fragility assessment in August 2012, with support from UNDP. A multi-day assessment workshop brought together 100 participants, including the Vice-President, as well as ministers, advisers and representatives from central and state governments, civil society, academia and international partners. The findings and recommendations, complemented by relevant literature and qualitative data, were reviewed during a second workshop in November 2012, which was attended by more than 50 stakeholders.

The assessment provides an overview of the key findings for each of the peacebuilding and State-building goals along a five-tiered axis ranging from crisis to resilience and an overview of progress, challenges and priority actions to help the country to advance towards resilience. It was a qualitative, rather than quantitative, exercise intended to contribute to an improved understanding of fragility.

The overall assessment result suggested that South Sudan had made sufficient progress on all five goals since the Comprehensive Peace Agreement interim period and independence in July 2011 to move beyond the crisis stage of the fragility spectrum. While none of the goals have reached transition yet, reform efforts seem to have borne the most fruit with regard to legitimate politics, following the 99.8 per cent vote for secession from the Sudan, which was held in January 2011. Moving forward, key challenges include sustainable internal political settlements, the transformation of the security sector, the reform of justice institutions, the creation of diversified economic foundations and strengthened capacity for accountable and equitable service delivery.

19. Following the finalization of the fragility assessment and in line with the New Deal's "One vision, one plan" for the transition out of fragility, the Government started preparations to formulate its development priorities under the South Sudan Development Initiative. The Initiative aims to bring together the priorities of the South Sudan Development Plan and the Core Functions under Austerity initiative. The South Sudan Development Initiative should pave the way towards the establishment of a compact with international partners, which is envisaged as a key mechanism for the implementation of the Initiative.

20. From 17 to 19 December, South Sudan hosted the Steering Group of the International Dialogue on Peacebuilding and Statebuilding. About 40 senior officials from 15 donor capitals and Group of Seven Plus countries, as well as from the headquarters of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, the United Nations and the World Bank, convened in Juba to deliberate the global New Deal agenda. Co-chaired by the Minister for Development Cooperation of Denmark, Christian Bach, and the Minister of Finance of Timor-Leste, Emilia Pires, the discussion provided an opportunity for international partners to discuss the use of country systems for aid delivery in South Sudan. In particular, discussions focused on how to use the New Deal as a framework to increase budget support, although it was pointed out that there were other options for using country systems on a flexible basis that needed to be explored.

21. Meanwhile, the United Nations realigned its programmes with the five peacebuilding and State-building goals. Legitimate politics to foster political settlements and conflict resolution, the first goal, addresses the nascent experience of South Sudan with democratic governance, the need for political inclusion and mechanisms to mitigate conflicts. The overwhelming majority of South Sudanese remain distant from decision-making and legitimate politics, in particular young people. With only limited capacity to manage political diversity, State authorities are often unable to provide opportunities for dissent, discussion and reconciliation.

United Nations efforts focus on supporting Government efforts to broaden political decision-making, widen the political space and build the capacity of national actors to manage conflict.

22. Improving security, the second goal, is a prerequisite for development but requires the improved effectiveness and accountability of law enforcement institutions. Weak State authority in remote areas, combined with the proliferation of small arms, has made it possible for communities to arm unemployed and illiterate young men on whom they rely for security. Through its support for the extension of State authority and the strengthening of community security, the United Nations helps to address the following priorities: supporting the Government's national security policy and strategy; supporting the further professionalization of the security forces, including through support for a new disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme; helping the Government to establish early warning systems in priority counties; and improving access to insecure areas.

23. In the context of South Sudan, justice, the third peacebuilding and State-building goal, refers to accessible and fair mechanisms to address grievances. The diminishing authority of traditional leaders, combined with the limited reach of the formal justice system, leaves citizens with limited opportunities to seek redress and resolve their grievances through institutional mechanisms, rather than violence. The United Nations supports a two-track approach that focuses on extending the formal justice system and strengthening traditional mechanisms for conflict resolution. The United Nations supports the development of the country's legal frameworks, including improving relevant national legislation, expanding legal aid support, strengthening the criminal justice system and improving adherence to human rights standards, while also working to support traditional authorities in their role as arbiters of intercommunal disputes.

24. Competition over scarce resources and the absence of economically productive activities present key challenges for peacebulding and State-building. Communities frequently cite conflict over grazing lands and access to water points, including between agriculturalists and pastoralists, as major causes of violence. Building economic foundations, the fourth goal, can help to reduce violence and support State take-off. In the short term, income-earning opportunities for marginalized groups, including young people, can be created through labour-intensive public and community works. In the long term, strong economic foundations require economic diversification, an educated workforce and strong regulatory frameworks, in particular for resource management. The United Nations is supporting measures to create economic opportunities and improve access to resources, including the following priorities: counteracting the militarization and marginalization of uneducated, unemployed young people by helping the Government to launch targeted programmes; introducing vocational training and establishing literacy centres in priority counties; improving access to water in rural areas for grazing and in human settlements; and helping the Government to establish land allocation and dispute mechanisms.

25. The management of revenues for the expansion of basic services represents the fifth goal within the New Deal fragility assessment. Strengthening the State's ability to raise, prioritize and manage resources for equitable social service delivery is critical during the early years of statehood. Many areas in South Sudan are chronically underresourced, resulting in tensions between communities and ethnic

groups. Where services reach local levels, they are largely provided through non-State entities and with little State ownership. The lack of tangible progress in the provision of services by the State, including in the education, health, water and sanitation sectors, has fuelled perceptions of exclusion from post-independence gains, contributing to resentment and diminishing confidence in Government. United Nations support addresses measures to improve the equitable distribution of revenue and increase the Government's capacity to deliver basic services. It is focused on the following strategic priorities: helping the Government to conduct a new census to allow the equitable sharing of revenue and fair access to services across the 10 states; helping to build the Government's capacity to allocate resources fairly; supporting the Government in expanding the delivery of essential services; and supporting Government efforts to establish a household cash transfer system, which reinforces the social compact and shows that the Government is committed to the welfare of its people.

Box 3
Cattle Camp Initiative

The livestock sector stands out as perhaps the single most important area through which the livelihoods of the rural poor in South Sudan can be permanently improved. With the largest livestock per capita holding in Africa (an estimated total of 11.7 million cattle), there is immense potential for the sector to sustainably meet domestic demand for livestock products, provide surplus for exports and, above all, generate enough income to permanently improve the livelihoods of the population, more than 80 per cent of which is rural.

The Cattle Camp Initiative strategically focuses on building the risk management and productive capacities of pastoralists to enhance their ability to withstand shocks and adapt to changing conditions. The primary focus of the Initiative is on reducing and managing shocks to pastoralists and building productive, human, natural and financial resources within livestock-dependent households and communities. The Initiative will improve rural livelihoods and progressively diminish the heavy reliance on humanitarian response in Jonglei.

The Initiative will consist of three key pillars necessary to support pastoralist systems in South Sudan: a community security pillar led by UNDP to manage violence; a livelihood pillar led by FAO to strengthen the productive capacity of pastoralist households; and a basic services pillar led by the United Nations Children's Fund to address chronic relative deprivation and expand future life opportunities. FAO will coordinate the activities of the three pillars. The three-pillar design is in line with the United Nations Policy for Post-Conflict Employment Creation, Income Generation and Reintegration approved by the Secretary-General in 2009.

Designed as a focused joint programme with a limited number of agencies, the Initiative uses a programmatic, integrated approach centred on rural livelihoods that clusters activities for maximum impact. Each pillar is led by the United Nations agency with a comparative advantage in the sector. Activities are simple and scalable and adhere to strategic principles of pro-poor, horizontal development that leverage community resources. The community security pillar will emphasize customary law and weapons management, the livelihood pillar will use a pro-poor approach emphasizing peer learning and local innovation, and the basic services pillar will use "light and lean" mobile service delivery with no formal barriers to entry.

Pillar 1: Extension of State authority and re-establishment of community governance mechanisms

Customary law systems and weapons management in pastoralist areas must be strengthened to curb high levels of violence. Cattle raiding remains a low-risk, high-reward criminal activity that adds to the current levels of insecurity in the country. Owing to easy access to weapons, young people in some communities act with increasing independence and often outside the interests of the broader community and traditional systems of restraint. The security pillar will undertake such activities as uniform-for-civilian clothing swaps, mapping of customary law and formation of weapons management committees.

Pillar 2: Strengthening pastoralist productive capacity and the diversification of livelihoods

The pastoralist field school is a simple, proven approach that, together with mobile skills training, forms the core of the livelihood pillar. The organizational capacity of community-based pastoral institutions will be strengthened, and the ability of pastoralists to participate in decision-making processes affecting their livestock and welfare will improve. Short, mobile skills trainings will be delivered in agroprocessing, fisheries, blacksmithing and other rural trades.

Pillar 3: Increasing pastoralist access to basic services through mobile approaches

Mobile pastoralists require mobile service delivery. The expansion of mobile schools and youth-to-youth health education are the core interventions of the basic services pillar. Fixed service delivery models in South Sudan are expensive to build, difficult to maintain and lie unused during seasons when pastoralists move with their herds. Yet the need for basic services is extreme; thus, this pillar aims to address this need through scalable approaches that can reach large numbers of young people.

VI. Status of implementation of United Nations plans

United Nations Development Assistance Framework

26. The South Sudan United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2012-2013 was developed to ensure the United Nations system's coherent support to the newly independent Republic of South Sudan and the achievement of the South Sudan Development Plan. The United Nations Development Assistance Framework was based directly on the South Sudan Development Plan and focused on five outcome areas:

(a) Core governance and civil service functions are established and operational;

(b) Chronic food insecurity is reduced and livelihood opportunities increase;

(c) Key basic service delivery systems are in place, laying the groundwork for increased demand;

(d) Violence is reduced and community security improves;

(e) Access to justice and the rule of law improves.

27. However, the first year of implementation of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework was heavily affected by austerity, which severely strained the necessary expansion of Government capacity, cut budgets in key institutions and created uncertainty regarding the strength of the national economy. The United Nations therefore supported the Government in developing its Core Functions under Austerity initiative, which outlines the most important measures needed to keep the State functioning during this period, and reprioritized the Framework to reflect this new reality.

Box 4
Reprioritized United Nations Development Assistance Framework

Following the oil shutdown, in an effort to ensure that the United Nations system was adequately prepared with a unified set of priorities in case of prolonged austerity, the United Nations country team prioritized the programmes in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework into three tiers. Tier I includes critical United Nations country team programmes that need to be implemented, even in conditions of austerity, tier II includes those programmes that can be rescaled on the basis of resource availability, and tier III includes those programmes that should be put on hold in the current context.

Following guidance provided by the Government, the programmes in tiers I and II aim to address the most important priorities in the advent of prolonged austerity, including:

- Safeguarding front-line service delivery in the areas of health, education, water and sanitation
- Addressing food insecurity to help households to survive the "hunger gap" and remain inside the productive cycle

- Reinforcing core governance functions, including systems for public financial management and accountability
- Preventing an escalation of violence

In deciding to which tier a programme should belong, the United Nations country team reflected on the consequences of non-implementation and took into account whether:

- Government financing is necessary for the programme to succeed
- Partners have the capacity to deliver under austerity conditions
- Funding is either currently available or likely to be available
- Implementation will reach the most destitute households
- The programme promotes self-help and greater community involvement
- The programme helps to preserve previous development gains
- The programme helps to prevent the further deterioration of living conditions
- The programme is cost-efficient

United Nations Peacebuilding Support Plan

28. In accordance with Security Council resolution 1996 (2011), the United Nations country team and UNMISS worked with the Government of South Sudan and bilateral and multilateral partners to develop an integrated strategic plan to support the consolidation of peace in the country. In accordance with the principles of national ownership, the priorities set out in the Peacebuilding Support Plan are drawn directly from the four pillars that constitute the South Sudan Development Plan, as well as from key political transition processes provided for in the Transitional Constitution of South Sudan. A total of 15 priority deliverables were identified, which the United Nations is working to realize.

29. Since 2010, Southern Sudan, as part of the Sudan, had been eligible for funding from the Peacebuilding Fund. In support of the peacebuilding agenda, the Peacebuilding Support Office allocated $10 million under its Peacebuilding Recovery Facility to support priority projects in the Peacebuilding Support Plan for South Sudan. Given that the $10 million available through the Fund would meet only slightly more than 3 per cent of the Peacebuilding Support Plan's funding needs, the United Nations country team and UNMISS engaged in consultations with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning in order to select priority deliverables for which funding should be sought. The following two deliverables were identified: vocational and literacy training for youth (deliverable 12); and the construction of *haffir* and water points (deliverable 13).

30. The following criteria were used in selecting those two deliverables:

(a) Aligned with Government priorities;

(b) Priorities that emerged from extensive community-level consultations;

(c) Demonstrating tangible peace dividends;

(d) Ensuring a sustainable and larger impact;

(e) Addressing aspects that have substantial secondary effects (hence, literacy, which is a prerequisite for many peace-related activities, as well as for sustainable development in general);

(f) Avoiding overlap with existing funds (e.g. the South Sudan Recovery Fund, the Common Humanitarian Fund and the Basic Services Fund, which cover the areas of stabilization, humanitarian services and basic services, respectively);

(g) Enhancing synergies with other existing peacebuilding-related activities;

(h) Encouraging the engagement of United Nations agencies with a comparative advantage.

31. In line with the requirements of the Peacebuilding Fund, a joint steering committee was established to approve applications to the Fund, on the basis of the already-existing mechanism of the South Sudan Recovery Fund, which is jointly chaired by the Deputy Minister of Finance and the Resident Coordinator. In March 2013, eight proposals were reviewed by the steering committee, and three proposals recommended for funding are currently undergoing final recommended revisions.

VII. Support for capacity development

32. Capacity-building remains one of the highest development priorities for South Sudan, as set out in the South Sudan Development Plan and its capacity development strategy. United Nations capacity enhancement approaches in South Sudan are based on South-South cooperation and, in accordance with the preference of the Government, focused on skills transfer through mentoring. Consistent with the priority actions outlined in the report of the Secretary-General on civilian capacity (A/66/311-S/2011/527), United Nations agencies have built partnerships with regional governments and organizations to embed public administrators and technical specialists at the national, state and county levels, where they mentor their South Sudanese counterparts.

33. Under the UNDP rapid capacity placement initiative launched in 2009, 120 United Nations Volunteer specialists have been embedded in public sector offices and agencies, mostly at the state level. Under the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) Regional Initiative for Capacity Enhancement in South Sudan, launched in January 2011, 200 experienced civil servants from IGAD member States are being deployed to core ministries. The United Nations Population Fund has implemented a complementary initiative through which 20 United Nations Volunteer midwives from neighbouring countries are embedded in health systems in all 10 states, increasing the number of births in the presence of skilled attendants and supporting community midwives and traditional birth attendants.

VIII. Coordination within the United Nations system

34. In support of Security Council resolution 2057 (2012), the United Nations country team has strengthened its coordination and planning with UNMISS where appropriate. Through the establishment of regular forums, the United Nations country team and UNMISS meet on a weekly basis for discussion and information sharing on day-to-day developments in South Sudan. Joint work plans have been established in the areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, the rule of law, child protection, HIV/AIDS response and gender between the Mission and the relevant United Nations agencies. Extensive consultations have been held on strategic planning processes, such as the Mission's results-based budget. As mandated by the Security Council, the United Nations country team and UNMISS jointly developed and commenced the implementation of the Peacebuilding Support Plan.

35. The United Nations country team's programme management team continued to lead the coordination and monitoring of strategic programmatic action. In the past year, ongoing joint programmes were implemented in support of youth employment, conflict prevention and peacebuilding, while new joint programmes were developed to support local youth services and a cattle camp initiative. The United Nations country team has also committed to strengthening its collective monitoring and evaluation in 2013 and will complete the full mapping of the "4W" database (who, what, where, when), which began in September 2012, to help map agency activities at the state and county levels and identify key areas of programmatic and geographic convergence.

36. In support of the "Delivering as one" agenda, the United Nations country team's operations management team has stepped up its efforts to streamline the coordination of programme delivery, improve efficiency and reduce transaction costs. The operations management team has worked closely with UNMISS on issues related to the status-of-forces agreement, clearance procedures for items delayed in customs, and staffing issues, such as payment in United States dollars for national staff. The harmonized approach to cash transfers is due to be rolled out in 2013.

IX. Coordination with international financial institutions

37. The Government is in discussions with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and other international partners regarding managed budget support. While the provision of such externally managed support could fill part of the budget deficit, negotiations with IMF on access to the Poverty Reduction and Growth Trust had not been concluded by the end of the reporting period and no other commitments had yet been secured.

38. Meetings of the Inter-Donor Coordination Forum, which brings together traditional and non-traditional development partners and is co-chaired by the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the World Bank Country Manager for South Sudan, became regular during the reporting period and are now held on a monthly basis. The Forum is a key platform for sharing analysis and information and establishing a common understanding of emerging issues and developments. It also helps to raise awareness on progress in the implementation of United Nations country team programmes and identifies critical funding gaps. Food security trends, support to the rule of law sector, the establishment of a health basket fund and

progress on the implementation of the New Deal are among the topics that regularly feature in the agenda of the Forum.

X. Challenges and recommendations

39. **Given the need to consolidate the important advances made thus far in the country's development, as well as the fragile environment in which such changes are taking hold, there is an urgent need for predictable resources to support longer-term development and address State-building challenges in South Sudan. Appropriate levels of funding should be balanced with sufficient flexibility to respond effectively to new challenges as they emerge.**

40. **Given the importance of State capacity in economic and social transformation, including policymaking and implementation, investment in Government capacity should continue to be consolidated and expanded, and key areas for technical support, such as public financial management, identified and prioritized. National systems for service delivery should meanwhile be increasingly empowered to take ownership of implementation.**

41. **Recognizing the importance of a coordinated and targeted approach to development, the United Nations should continue to build on its efforts to harmonize its processes, both within the United Nations system ("Delivering as one") and with the Government and external partners. Ongoing dialogue between the United Nations, the Government and the donor community should continue to inform planning processes to ensure that development initiatives remain relevant and sustainable and in line with the priorities of the Government and the needs of the people of South Sudan. Addressing the special needs of women should be fully taken into account in this context.**

42. **Bearing in mind that UNMISS is an integrated mission designed to consolidate peace and security and to help establish conditions for development, it is essential that the good start made by the United Nations system in providing integrated support to the Government of South Sudan at the technical and operational levels be complemented by strong, integrated policy support and guidance at the intergovernmental level by the two principal bodies, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council, within their respective mandates and competencies.**

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Meeting of the 2012/13 Intersessional Panel of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

Note by the Secretariat

Summary

The 2012/13 Intersessional Panel of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development met in Lima from 7 to 9 January 2013. The meeting was hosted by the Government of Peru and chaired by Miguel Palomino de la Gala, Chair of the Commission for the period 2012/13.

One of the themes of the meeting was the 2013 annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council, the focus of which will be "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals". Under this theme, presentations were made by representatives of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, followed by discussions on key policy messages and recommendations to be delivered to the Council, as well as on regional challenges and priorities.

Key policy messages

The discussions held at the meeting, including those on the annual ministerial review, resulted in several key messages regarding the interface between science, technology and innovation, on the one hand, and development, on the other. Many of these messages also highlighted issues pertinent mainly, but not exclusively, to Latin America and the Caribbean. The key messages were as follows:

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- Investments in science and technology, and particularly information technology, have a positive impact on economic growth and social development. Science, technology and innovation offer solutions and options for overcoming development challenges, especially through "green" or low-carbon development strategies.
- Science and technology approaches can be used to avert climate change impacts. Countries should consider preparing an inventory of sources of greenhouse gas emissions and linking this inventory to a science and technology road map that proposes improvements in areas such as urbanization, transport, energy, waste management and deforestation.
- Local and traditional knowledge that builds on cultural values is crucial for the development of science and technology policies that address local issues.
- The development of appropriate modern infrastructure is essential to realizing the benefits of science, technology and innovation. Financing is a key element in this regard. New, innovative business models are needed to capitalize on available opportunities. One initiative mentioned was the Little Rock Accord signed by the Club de Madrid and the P-80 Group Foundation, which aims to link resources available through sovereign wealth and pension funds and other sources to viable projects.
- Greater urgency should be attached to the challenges created by a growing middle class and the pursuit of unsustainable consumption and production patterns. For many developing countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, population growth may be a less urgent concern than the issue of increasing consumption.
- There is a need to distinguish between high and low technology and their use in and application to particular contexts.
- Information and communications technology and broadband access should be seen as empowering science, technology and innovation. Public-private partnerships should be established to enable progress in both realms.
- Strong policy and regulatory frameworks are needed and the development of a culture of innovation should be encouraged through education. National development strategies, including broadband and spectrum allocation policies, should be elaborated.
- Internet literacy and the development of high-quality local content play a critical role in the penetration and use of broadband, in addition to the issue of infrastructure.

I. Introduction

1. In July 2013, the Economic and Social Council will hold its seventh annual ministerial review at the United Nations Office at Geneva. The focus of the review will be "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals".

2. In preparation for the annual ministerial review, the 2012/13 Intersessional Panel of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development held a meeting on 9 January 2013 to discuss regional challenges and priorities relating mainly, but not exclusively, to Latin America and the Caribbean.

3. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), which is responsible for the substantive servicing of the Commission, organized the meeting in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat.

4. The meeting brought together representatives of Commission member States and a diverse group of stakeholders from Governments, the private sector, academia, non-governmental organizations and the United Nations system, to discuss the role of science, technology and innovation in promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals. It also provided an important opportunity for Commission member countries to contribute to the annual ministerial review and to exchange best practices and lessons learned.

II. Issues relating to science, technology and innovation for development

5. At each of its annual sessions, the Commission selects priority themes to be reviewed during the following intersessional period. At its fifteenth session, held in Geneva from 21 to 25 May 2012, the Commission chose two substantive themes for the 2012/13 intersessional period, namely, "Science, technology and innovation for sustainable cities and peri-urban communities" and "Internet broadband for an inclusive digital society". These priority themes were discussed at length during the meeting of the Commission's 2012/13 Intersessional Panel, with the participation of experts.

A. Science, technology and innovation for sustainable cities and peri-urban communities

6. Participants discussed the challenges that cities faced on their path towards sustainable urban development. Major challenges included unplanned urban growth and the need to prioritize the elaboration and implementation of effective strategies to improve urbanization processes. Issues relating to institutional capacity for serving new growth areas and problems such as pollution were major concerns in many developing countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean. Science, technology and innovation could help to solve those urban challenges by enhancing urban management, delivering better environmental outcomes, providing higher

resilience to natural risks, improving resource efficiency and creating new employment opportunities.

7. On the issue of sustainable mobility, experts highlighted the importance of enhancing public transportation, promoting bicycle use and improving pedestrian infrastructure and stressed the imperative to reduce travel needs, to shift towards more sustainable transportation models and to enhance energy efficiency.

8. Experts underlined the opportunities for science, technology and innovation to support urban and peri-urban farming. Greener cities could help to deal with problems resulting from rapid urbanization. Nevertheless, many countries still lacked legal and institutional frameworks for the integration of agriculture in urban areas and the provision of services and financing for small growers.

9. Experts also highlighted the role of public policy in fostering innovation ecosystems that built science, technology and innovation capacity for sustainable urbanization. The sustainable development paradigm required new approaches to meeting basic needs. Both high and low technologies needed to be integrated into a working system of solutions. Innovation ecosystems should ensure that technology moved from inventors to beneficiaries. New financing models were important in order to deploy available technologies. For example, the Little Rock Accord signed by the Club de Madrid and the P-80 Group Foundation in December 2012 aimed to mobilize pension and sovereign wealth funds for investment into technologies that addressed climate change and resource shortages.

B. Internet broadband for an inclusive digital society

10. Participants underscored that broadband access was of great importance for development, especially in sectors such as education, health, agriculture, finance/banking, e-Government and local entrepreneurship. There were challenges and gaps to be overcome in order for the benefits of broadband and information and communications technology (ICT) to become a reality. Despite tremendous improvements, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, particularly in access to mobile phones, it was noted that broadband access was still lagging owing to the gap in mobile broadband penetration in the region. Experts argued that the digital divide in the region in terms of access, penetration and use was becoming wider. Participants identified key action areas for continued development of broadband access, including increased Government commitment, improved regulatory frameworks promoting competition and investment and coordinated demand strategies so that consumers could adopt and benefit from broadband access.

11. Participants saw broadband as a major tool for an inclusive world, reducing inequalities and improving access to health care and information. Despite the benefits of broadband, many countries struggled with its high cost. Therefore, there was a need to bridge the gap in access and affordability at both the regional and the country levels.

III. Follow-up to the World Summit on the Information Society, including preparations for the sixteenth session of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development

12. Participants reviewed the implementation of the outcomes of the World Summit on the Information Society. It was emphasized that the Summit helped to maintain the multi-stakeholder nature of Internet governance discussions. Participants reported on and assessed their own efforts towards implementation of the Summit outcomes. They also shared their plans for achieving the targets set out in the plan of action for the 10-year review of implementation of the outcomes of the Summit, which provided Summit stakeholders with both guidance and a vision for the way beyond 2015.

13. The World Summit on the Information Society Forum, launched in 2006 in follow-up to the Tunis Agenda for the Information Society and organized by the International Telecommunication Union in collaboration with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNCTAD and the United Nations Development Programme, provided a mechanism for evaluating and rewarding stakeholder efforts to implement the Summit outcomes. Reference was made to the report *Measuring the Information Society 2012*, which delivered two authoritative benchmarking tools for monitoring information society developments worldwide: the ICT Development Index, which ranked countries' performance with regard to ICT infrastructure and uptake, and the ICT Price Basket, which tracked and compared the cost and affordability of ICT services.

14. Both the ICT Development Index and the ICT Price Basket were powerful measures for benchmarking and explaining differences among countries and within regions when it came to ICT developments.

15. It was noted that significant progress had been made in terms of ICT statistical production, although there were still deficits in conceptual and methodological references. It was stated that developing countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, could contribute to and benefit from the 10-year review process in two ways: by conducting an assessment of their progress towards meeting Summit targets; and by providing a regional approach to the prospects and future challenges of the information society.

IV. 2013 annual ministerial review of the Economic and Social Council

16. Vijaya Kumar, Chair of the Industrial Technology Institute of Sri Lanka and member of the Commission, informed participants that science, technology and innovation could help: (a) to raise life expectancy from 50 to 64 years of age; (b) to reduce infant mortality from 13 to 6 per cent; (c) to improve access to safe water from 35 to 65 per cent; (d) to raise the literacy rate from less than 50 to 70 per cent; and (e) to improve living standards for billions of people. Country competitiveness based solely on low labour costs was ultimately unsustainable and would soon vanish. As such, an alternative paradigm of country development was being used to find ways in which science and technology infrastructures and relevant policy initiatives could foster sustainable economic growth.

17. He said that poverty reduction strategies should focus more on rural and urban productivity, health, education, gender equality, water and sanitation, environmental sustainability, as well as on science, technology and innovation. Real development progress had not reached the most vulnerable, considering that the poorest children were still experiencing the slowest progress in improved nutrition and that the opportunities for full and productive employment for women were still scarce. Science, technology and innovation had more potential to contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. The Commission had recommended targeting of 1 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP) on research and development-related spending, but only a few developing countries were able to do so, with most giving low priority to investment in science, technology and innovation. That was unsurprising given the low human capacity in science, technology and innovation in developing countries and the fact that those countries could not enjoy immediate returns on their investments. The main achievements in ICT were principally in mobile telephony, driven by the private sector, and in the Internet penetration rate, which had reached 21 per cent in developing countries. In his view, the United Nations needed to focus its science, technology and innovation interventions on improving capacity to absorb technology, enhancing employment in the manufacturing industry and improving agricultural productivity of certain crops.

18. Mario Castillo, Project Coordinator, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean, made a presentation entitled "Science, technology and innovation in Latin America and the Caribbean". In his presentation, he noted that the region had enjoyed nearly a decade of relatively high growth, that inflation was under control in nearly all countries and that, in general, stable economic conditions prevailed. Despite that improvement, the gap in science, technology and innovation between developed countries and countries in Latin America and the Caribbean continued to be significant. Specifically, he emphasized the low levels of innovation in the region and the persistence of the productivity gap compared with developed countries. The current patterns of economic growth in Latin America and the Caribbean were not consistent with sustainable development. In the current context, natural resource governance was key to achieving sustainable development in Latin America and the Caribbean. The magnitude of the effort to move towards a more sustainable development path implied significant modifications in the current patterns of production, consumption and distribution, the technological paradigm and the existing relative price structure.

19. Neil Pierre, Chief, Policy Coordination Branch, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, said that the Commission was meeting at a crucial time for the Council, as the focus of the Commission's deliberations related directly to the theme of the Council's 2013 annual ministerial review, namely "Science, technology and innovation, and the potential of culture, for promoting sustainable development and achieving the Millennium Development Goals". Moreover, the timing of the meeting marked the commencement of the General Assembly's work on elaborating a set of sustainable development goals and coincided with significant advancement in the preparations for a post-2015 United Nations development agenda. Superimposing those major concurrent initiatives was the intergovernmental focus on strengthening the Council itself. The key policy messages and recommendations from the meeting would be transmitted to the Council's substantive session in July. The main messages coming out of the deliberations, together with those coming out of other regional consultations, would be incorporated into the report of the

Secretary-General on the annual ministerial review, to be presented to the Council at its substantive session in July. Additionally, the Secretary-General has been requested to submit a thematic report, also for discussion in July, on the Council's contributions to the post-2015 development agenda. There, too, the contributions of the Commission would be valuable. Mainstreaming science, technology and innovation into the proposed sustainable development goals and post-2015 development framework would be critical to integrating the three elements of sustainable development. Economic, social and environmental policies were closely intertwined with science, technology and innovation systems, which should be seen both as a means of implementing any agreed development framework and as central elements of such a framework. Science and technology had a crucial role to play in informing people's understanding of the mechanisms of sustainable development, in developing options for sustainable growth and in facilitating the adoption of evidence-based practices, he concluded.

20. The various presentations made and discussions held during the meeting formed a backdrop to discussions on the 2013 annual ministerial review. The deliberations helped to identify some policy messages from developing countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, that could be relevant to the theme of the annual ministerial review during the global review of progress in science, technology and innovation and culture in July 2013. In particular, during the discussion on the priority theme "Science, technology and innovation for sustainable cities and peri-urban communities" participants explored issues related to science, technology and innovation and sustainable development in the context of promoting clean energy. During the discussion on the priority theme "Internet broadband for an inclusive digital society", meanwhile, participants focused on how sectoral dimensions of science, technology and innovation (in this case, ICT) could be better integrated so as to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

V. Conclusions

21. Across the developing world, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, challenges remain, such as the need for sustained efforts in innovation and technological development, a pronounced digital divide, relatively low access to broadband in terms of affordability and availability and heterogeneity in terms of broadband infrastructure investment, with consequences for achieving inclusive societies. The main conclusions and recommendations of the 2012/13 Intersessional Panel are as follows:

(a) Latin America and the Caribbean exhibits increased economic, social and political stability and good overall economic performance. General projections for the region are very good as it continues to enjoy increased social partnerships and social dialogue and lower levels of unemployment;

(b) Despite these positive trends, there is a high degree of inequality across the developing world, including in Latin America and the Caribbean. Education quality and access is also uneven. While foreign direct investment levels have risen in recent years, there are low levels of technology absorption, technological inputs in exports and labour productivity;

(c) To offset some of these challenges, policies should be implemented to strengthen the links between low-productivity sectors and sectors that are at the

technological frontier in many developing countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean. Greater incentives should be considered to channel foreign direct investment into increasing labour productivity and technological absorption;

(d) Developing countries, including in Latin America and the Caribbean, should increase their investment in research and development, which currently averages 1 per cent of GDP, in order to enhance innovation and to capitalize on its economic and social benefits;

(e) Public policy and regulation should be geared towards increasing investment in education and digital literacy. In addition, ICT regulatory and strategic planning and visioning frameworks should be established or strengthened, where necessary.